

November 30, 1965

Dr. Rene Dubos
The Rockefeller Institute
New York 21, New York

Dear Dr. Dubos:

Further on "euthenics" - I did not completely answer your question.

Hunt in "Intelligence and Experience" (Ronald, 1961) has an optimistic discussion rather widely quoted in mental retardation circles. Most euthenic discussion these days is focussed on the lower side of the spectrum, i.e., remedial problems. A very comprehensive and often critical survey I would strongly recommend is Stevens and Heber, "Mental Retardation, a review of research" (Chicago, 1964).

Do you know Haller's book "Eugenics: hereditarian attitudes in American thought" (Rutgers, 1963), which has a lot of useful background? (Shockley* might feel less of a revolutionary if he knew this.) He quotes "euthenics" = reform of man's environment, perhaps a little broader than "education".

I can't entirely agree with you that human evolution has come to a standstill. With his drastic change of environment and culture man is probably evolving at an unprecedented speed, on an absolute time scale. Perhaps we would both agree with this, together with the statement that this time scale is in any case immensely slower than the pace of socio-cultural evolution.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

*U.S. News and World Report for November 22, 1965.

DUBOS